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UNCLAS HARARE 001649

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT GOZ BANS NGOS FROM DISTRIBUTING FOOD
RELIEF IN ZIM; HARARE

- ¶1. Under headline "Merchants of hunger" the independent daily "The Daily News" dedicated its August 20 editorial to denouncing the government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) for ordering donor agencies in Zimbabwe to surrender all food aid to village headman. Excerpts:
- ¶2. "Not content with the hunger and suffering imposed on Zimbabweans by its ruinous land policies, the government is now actively seeking to scuttle efforts by international relief agencies to avert starvation in the country. In total disregard of assurances given last year by none other than director James Morris that the government would not interfere with food aid distribution, the government last week ordered donor groups to surrender all food aid to village headmen. . .most of them known ruling ZANU PF supporters. . .Why the government wants to wrest control over food distribution from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which have been operating without interference from any quarter, only (Social Welfare Minister July) Moyo and his comrades in the government know. But knowing the government's past record, Zimbabweans will be forgiven for cynically concluding that this must be yet another attempt by the ruling ZANU PF to maintain its stranglehold on power. In its strange logic of putting its own political survival before everything else, the government clearly sees food aid as a political tool with which to buy support or punish opponents. . . ."

SULLIVAN